

removal of lead hazards from our old homes and buildings is a slow process and success can be long in coming, but with dedicated public servants like Ron I have no doubt that success will indeed be met. Thank you, Ron, and congratulations to you for making Vermont's Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Program the continuing success it is today.

RETIREMENT OF SAM WHITEHORN

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a member of my staff who will be leaving the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation after more than 15 years working for this institution and more than 25 years of service to the American public. Sam Whitehorn has been my deputy staff director and general counsel on the Commerce Committee during the 109th Congress, but he has worked diligently for the committee's membership and many of our predecessors during more than a decade as senior counsel on the Aviation Subcommittee. I know Senators Jay Rockefeller, Fritz Hollings, and Wendell Ford hold Sam in the highest regard for his commitment to this institution and his efforts to pass legislation that established the United States as a world leader in aviation and transportation policy.

Sam's reputation as an expert and dogged proponent of aviation security, safety, and economic viability is known to everyone in the aviation community. His ability to negotiate and work in a bipartisan fashion has served the committee honorably, allowing aviation legislation to consistently move responsibly and timely. His accomplishments speak well of him: he has been involved in the passage of six Federal Aviation Administration Authorization, FAA, reauthorization bills during his tenure. While Sam has more recently expanded his reach to other major aspects of the Commerce Committee's agenda, aviation continues to have a special place in his heart.

This country and the aviation industry also have benefited from Sam's commitment to public service and his expertise on the issues during one of our most difficult times in modern history. After the horrible attacks of September 11, 2001, he helped lead the passage of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, which established the Transportation Security Administration, TSA. That legislation was instrumental in restoring public confidence in our aviation system.

He also played a central role in the development of legislation that currently funds the aviation system, efforts to advance the modernization of the National Airspace System, NAS, and promoted workplace reforms at the FAA which have helped place the agency on a more economically viable path. To put it simply, Sam Whitehorn's name is synonymous with aviation safety, security, and viability.

Prior to working for the Senate Commerce Committee, Sam worked at the

U.S. Department of Transportation, DOT, as a senior attorney in the Office of the General Counsel for Regulations and Enforcement where he represented the DOT on a host of aviation issues. Before that he was a staff attorney in the antitrust section of the Civil Aeronautics Board, CAB, the precursor to the FAA.

While Sam has a passion for aviation and has been truly devoted to the Senate Commerce Committee, nothing has been more important to him than his family. From his upbringing in New Hyde Park, NY, to the many years he has spent in his adopted hometown of Washington, DC, his close-knit family has been vital to his success. We have seen his dedication to his wife Carol, who has been extremely patient at times, and more recently saw him watch proudly as his son Michael and daughter Zoe went off to college. We greatly appreciate their willingness to share Sam with us for these many years.

As Sam retires from the Senate, we wish him nothing but the best. He will be missed, but his legacy will remain strong as we continue to tackle aviation issues in the future. I and this institution will miss him.

RETIRING U.S. ATTORNEY CHARLES LARSON, SR.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincerest congratulations and gratitude to retiring U.S. Attorney Charles "Chuck" Larson, Sr. While I could easily just focus on all Chuck has done in his years as the dedicated U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa, this man has given so much more in over 40 years of Government service.

When his country has called, Chuck has been there. He served in the U.S. Army and Army Reserves for 40 years, retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1989. Four U.S. Presidents have called on Chuck to serve in various capacities, and each time he has stepped forward and served with honor and distinction.

Chuck was first appointed as the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa by President Ronald Reagan in 1986 and continued to serve in this position under President George H.W. Bush through 1993. During his service at this post, Chuck went well above and beyond. He devoted himself to fighting the scourge of drug crime and abuse by bringing local, State, and federal agencies together. Chuck also recognized the need for community outreach, and he pioneered a number of programs that brought together community leaders, clergy, and citizens to explore approaches to reduce drug abuse in Iowa.

These ideas were recognized as very innovative at the time and led to President Clinton's call for Chuck to serve on the Commission on Drug-Free Communities, a post in which Chuck served with distinction and which his son, Chuck, Jr., fills today.

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Chuck was again called to duty as the U.S. Attorney in the

Northern District of Iowa by President Bush. He continued his aggressive and innovative strategies in this new and complex era of the war on terror. His efforts led to programs for the training of law enforcement and other emergency responders in dealing with and preventing terrorist attacks. Chuck extended this training effort to private industry and trade associations. Yet Chuck never ceased his efforts in Iowa in fighting crime and drug abuse. His past successes in community outreach programs and law enforcement coordination led to the creation of programs such as the "Weed and Seed" initiative in Cedar Rapids and the statewide "Meth and More" program. These programs not only helped put criminals behind bars but also provided help and support to thousands trapped in the destructive cycle of methamphetamine abuse and educated Iowa communities about the disastrous effects of drug abuse. His devotion to this cause can be summed up in Chuck's own words, "if we can save one life, then our efforts are a success."

In the midst of this, his country called yet again. In 2004, Mr. Larson was asked to serve as the senior Department of Justice representative in Iraq. Chuck was given the enormous task of directing and administering efforts to train Iraqi judiciary, law enforcement, and civilian contractors. He was tasked with nothing less than restoring justice and equity to the Iraqi judicial system. Despite the inherent dangers and complexities of his mission, Chuck yet again served with distinction.

Again, I offer my thanks and congratulations to U.S. Attorney Charles Larson, Sr. Chuck's dedication, devotion, and courage, again and again, provided invaluable service to our country and the great State of Iowa. Chuck, you are a true American and a model for all in Government service.

TRIBUTE TO KATIE GUMERSON ALTSHULER

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the service of Katie Gumeron Altshuler, my staff director at the Senate Republican policy committee. Katie has decided to return to her native Oklahoma and begin a new life as chief of staff to the Speaker of the House of the Oklahoma Legislature.

Katie became staff director of the RPC earlier this year, in what was the culmination of an impressive climb through the ranks of Senate staff leadership dating back to 1995 when she served as an intern for Senator Don Nickles when she was still in college. When Katie graduated from Sweet Briar College 2 years later, Senator Nickles hired her first as a staff assistant and then as a legislative correspondent. And in 1999, he promoted her into the majority whip's office, where she quickly became well known in the Capitol as a floor assistant and policy adviser to Republican Senators.